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ABSTRACT

Three issues (job descriptions, salary schedules, and credentials) in the employment of paraprofessionals in special education and other educational programs for the handicapped are examined in the report. A sampling of a variety of paraprofessional job descriptions leads to the strong recommendation that detailed job descriptions be provided paraprofessionals. Sample job descriptions and seven guidelines for their development are given. A review of salary schedules indicates a wide range with increases tied to seniority, education, and competencies. Eight questions to consider when developing a salary schedule are offered. Issues of certification considered include the difficulty of developing a model certification standard. Approaches to certification of paraprofessionals implemented by Louisiana, Texas, Kansas, and Vermont are described. Fifteen issues (such as the choice between state or local standards) are identified as important in the decision making process. Sample certification standards of Kansas, Wisconsin, Vermont, and Louisiana are appended. (DB)

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THE EMPLOYMENT OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

by

Andrew J. Humm

and

Anna Lou Pickett

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EC140400

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This paper is one of a series of monographs and reports, available from the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Special Education, that address issues concerning the training and utilization of paraprofessionals working in public school conditions. For more information about these reports and other services available through the Center contact: Anna Lou Pickett, Center for Advanced Study in Education, Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

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INTRODUCTION

This report deals with three main issues in the employment of paraprofessionals in special education and in other educational programs for the handicapped.

- First, it looks at what they're doing and what they're called -- their job descriptions.
- Second, it examines what they're being paid and what their raises are based on -- their salary schedules.
- Third, the whole question of credentialing is discussed with an emphasis on several statewide certification programs. Appendices reproduce documents from local school districts and state education departments illuminating these topics.

This is not a report on paraprofessional training programs. That burgeoning field is covered by George Kaplan's 1980 Special Needs, Special People: The Training of Paraprofessionals and the Education of Children with Handicaps. Specific training programs and other resource materials in the field are catalogued in Paraprofessional Bibliography (Pickett and Humm, 1980). George Kaplan's earlier work, The Vital Link (1978), gives a more narrative approach to the subject of what paraprofessionals are doing these days. And Anna Lou Pickett's Paraprofessionals in Special Education: The State of the Art (1980) reports on the sheer numbers of people working in the field and how they've increased over the past decade.

I. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

As teachers have taken on more responsibilities in the areas of administration, classroom management, program planning, and parent training, the paraprofessional has been entrusted with more and more instructional tasks. Some of these responsibilities would have evolved even if the teacher's role had not changed so much. Many paraprofessionals, especially those with some degree of training, have proven uniquely suited to the work of helping in the educational development of children with handicaps. Factors such as their commitment to the communities in which they live have added to their effectiveness in their new roles.

She or he may be called instructional aide or paraprofessional educational assistant or child development technician, but no matter what the title it's clear that the paraprofessional staff member has a job description now that goes far beyond housekeeping chores and clerical duties. These staff may have been brought originally into the classroom to relieve beleaguered teachers of menial tasks, but a variety of factors have contributed to their being given more complex jobs and responsibilities.

A sampling of a variety of paraprofessional job descriptions from a wide geographic area reveals two fairly consistent trends in delineating their roles and responsibilities. The first, predictably, is that almost all the descriptions begin with the qualification that all paraprofessional tasks must be performed under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher or another pro-

fessional. That qualification stated, however, the second trend is toward giving the paraprofessional more credit and responsibility. In Santa Clara, California, for example, they're looking for paraprofessionals who have "the ability to work independently" and "cooperatively." Educational Assistants in St. Paul, Minnesota assist "as needed in staff development and training activities" and are considered "interdisciplinary team members." They are also called upon to do public relations for their programs. In Evergreen, California the paraprofessionals even participate in determining the placement of students.

The Beloit (Kansas) Paraprofessional Handbook carries a statement that, while not countering the trend toward more paraprofessional responsibility, at least qualifies the trend in a way that most school districts would probably agree with. It reads, "The paraprofessional should not be employed to make the teacher's job any less responsible, but to improve the quality of the program for the exceptional students." The handbook goes on to outline "unacceptable duties and responsibilities," proscribing taking sole responsibility for a classroom or professional special service, interpreting results of tests, preparing lesson plans, and working with the most "difficult" students merely for the convenience of the teacher.

Some descriptions specifically include references to the paraprofessional's working relationship with the teacher. In the Roseville Area Schools in Roseville, Minnesota, Instructional Aides "meet regularly with teachers to evaluate student achievement." These paraprofessionals also "assist in the preparation of materials," tutor, and lead exercises.

Job Descriptions

In Wyandotte County, Kansas (taking in Kansas City), the job descriptions for paraprofessionals are laid out in terms of their titles, to whom they report, their purpose, duties and qualifications, as well as how they are to be evaluated -- about all one could reasonably expect to cover in a one-page description. The Purpose statement is brief and general, the Duties statement quite specific.

A list of the variety of titles for which separate job descriptions are provided is revealing of how the school district regards the uniqueness of different paraprofessional jobs. These titles include:

Assistant Teacher of the Homebound-Handicapped Program
Instructional Media Paraprofessional
Assistant Teacher for the Multi-Handicapped Program (App. 1-A)
Assistant Teacher for Speech Therapy for the Multiply Handicapped Program (Appendix 1-B)
Assistant Teacher for Vocational Therapy for the Multi-Handicapped Program
Assistant Teacher for Low Vision and Total Communications
Physical/Occupational Therapy Assistant
Paraprofessional for the Rainbow Facility School Program
Paraprofessional for the Special Service Center
Bus Aide

There is some overlap in these descriptions, but the County recognizes enough differentiation in paraprofessional staff to warrant this many distinct job descriptions.

It is also important to address the relationships between paraprofessionals and clients -- the children. Iowa School Aides are required to "have the ability to work with, show concern for,

and present a positive example to impaired and multi-impaired children, and the ability to exercise responsible judgment in rountine and emergency situations."

In Texas, Role Descriptions are actually written into state law. These descriptions are stated to serve as guidelines for the local school districts. In fact, the 115-word descriptions are followed by: "OR Performs equivalent activities as determined by the local school district." While not delineating the specifics of many Educational Aide Tasks, the Texas law states that they include performing "routine tasks under the direction of a certified teacher or teaching team." While the law says that Aides release the teacher from "routine tasks," all is not drudgery. They also participate in "selecting, planning, organizing and evaluating."

Mental health workers in Texas have job descriptions approved by the legislature, too. They are generic enough to take in workers in three settings -- mental health, mental retardation, and community based programs. This system promotes career mobility within the various divisions and programs operated by the State Department. Descriptions are provided for Mental Health/Mental Retardation Aides, Assistants (Appendix 1-H), Specialist I's, and Specialist II's. Each job description consists of a general description of the position, examples of the work performed, and the minimum qualifications. The qualifications are based on knowledge, experience, training, skills, abilities, physical characteristics, and temperament.

Evaluating paraprofessionals

In the job descriptions developed by the Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative, a system for evaluating paraprofessionals is included. It describes the criteria for evaluation and specifies who will do the evaluation. (Appendix 1-I.) Personal

qualities such as flexibility and stamina are rated along with job performance skills such as instructional skills.

A manual for local directors of special education developed jointly by the Indiana Developmental Training Center at Indiana University, the Porter County Special Education Cooperative, and the Division of Special Education in the Indiana Department of Public Instruction also stresses the importance of setting uniform standards for evaluating the performance of paraprofessionals.

The rating system they developed is designed to stimulate a dialogue between teacher and paraprofessional about current performance. Both strengths and areas in need of improvement are identified and discussed. (See Appendix 1-J.)

Conclusion

Paraprofessional staff can and have been used in so many different ways in educational settings. It is important to give recognition to their strengths and limitations when preparing their job descriptions. It is perhaps more important that paraprofessionals have detailed job descriptions. Whatever the good and bad points of a particular school system's use of paraprofessionals, it is always helpful for staff members to know just where they stand -- or where they are expected to stand.

There is no paradigmatic job description for a paraprofessional in special education any more than there is a single ideal paraprofessional. But those charged with developing job descriptions could be asking themselves some critical questions as they go about their work:

1. Does the job description include details of what we expect a special education paraprofessional to do?
2. Does it bear a true relation to what paraprofessionals in our area are already doing?
3. Does it sell short the abilities of the paraprofessionals to perform certain educational tasks or perhaps demand too much of them?
4. Is the nature of the teacher-paraprofessional relationship described in detail? Are relationships with other personnel described?
5. Does it include a description of the paraprofessional's relationship with the children served?
6. What about the job title itself? Does it reflect current trends in paraprofessional nomenclature? Is it a title that the paraprofessional can be proud of?

7. Were all necessary personnel (including para-professionals) consulted in the development of the job descriptions?

Appendix 1-A

Wyandotte County Comprehensive Special Education Cooperative
Kansas City, Kansas

Title: Assistant Teacher for the Multiply Handicapped Program

Reports to: Lead Teacher and Coordinator for the Multiply Handicapped Program

Purpose: The purpose of the position of assistant teacher for the multiply handicapped is to supervise and teach a specific classroom of trainable developmentally disabled and/or severely multiply handicapped students.

Duties:

1. The assistant teacher shall assist the lead teacher in planning activities for the classroom.
2. The assistant teacher shall assist in clerical work involved in the IEP process, i.e. preparation of Individual Teaching Programs.
3. The assistant teacher shall perform regular duties such as playground and lunchroom, with the lead teacher.
4. The assistant teacher shall attend and perhaps lead inservice sessions.
5. The assistant teacher shall work individually with students having special problems as directed by the lead teacher.

Qualfications: Qualifications for the position of assistant teacher for the multiply handicapped will be determined by the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education and the Kansas State Board of Education.

Evaluation: Evaluation of the assistant teacher will be conducted by the coordinator for multiply handicapped and the lead teacher.

Appendix 1-B

Wyandotte County Comprehensive Special Education Cooperative
Kansas City, Kansas

Title: Assistant Teacher for Speech Therapy for the Multiply Handicapped Program

Reports to: Speech Clinician for the Multiply Handicapped Program and the Coordinator of the Multiply Handicapped Program

Purpose:

1. The assistant teacher shall conduct and carry out individual speech and language programs as developed by the certified speech clinician.
2. The assistant teacher shall keep progress records and charts and assist in filing student records.
3. The assistant teacher shall attend inservice sessions as provided by the district and inservice meetings for speech clinicians.

Qualifications: Qualifications for the position of assistant teacher for speech therapy for the multiply handicapped program will be determined by the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education and the Kansas State Board of Education.

Evaluation: Evaluation of the assistant teacher for speech therapy will be conducted by the coordinator of the multiply handicapped program and the speech clinician for multiply handicapped.

Appendix 1-C

Santa Clara County Schools
San Jose, California

PERSONNEL COMMISSION
Office of the Santa Clara County
Superintendent of Schools
100 Skyport Drive
San Jose, California 95110
(408) 299-3701

PLEASE POST!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Classification: SPECIAL EDUCATION AIDE - LEARNING HANDICAPPED

An OPEN & PROMOTIONAL examination will be given to establish a list of eligible candidates for positions in this classification. Applicants will be notified, following the application deadline indicated below, of examination procedures in which they must compete. Final selection of appointees will be made from among the candidates who appear at the top of the resultant eligibility list, although reemployment lists and transfer and reinstatement requests will be given priority. A separate Promotional Eligibility List to receive initial consideration will be established except where this announcement indicates that the "dual certification" rule will be used in establishing the eligibility list. Lists are used for a specified period, usually one year, or until there are insufficient candidates remaining who are willing and available to accept employment.

	Range	Start	6 months	1½ years	2½ years	3½ years
Salary:	37					
10 Month Assignments		$692.35	$724.60	$758.02	$792.58	$830.60
12 Month Assignments		760.27	795.68	832.37	870.32	916.06

Application Deadline: Applications will be taken continuously, with examinations scheduled quarterly or as vacancies require.

DEFINITION: Working within the framework of a mental health treatment setting, the Aide in a Learning Handicapped class will assist teachers and staff with academic or other learning activities and implement programs designed to modify student behavior; will relieve teachers of routine clerical and authorized instructional duties, and perform related tasks as required.

REQUIREMENTS: The Aide in the Learning Handicapped program must be able to communicate effectively with staff, students, and others contacted in the course of work, and be able to speak, read, and write clearly and distinctly; have a knowledge of correct English usage, spelling, punctuation and grammar; an understanding of human development and the personal and social problems of children and adolescents; knowledge of principles of learning, motivation, and perception; ability to empathize with the special needs of emotionally distrubed students; ability to understand and follow oral and written directions; ability to work independently; ability to perform routine clerical duties; ability to direct group activities of students; ability to react with flexibility, creativity, and sensitivity to changing situations and needs; ability to work cooperatively with others.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The Aide will assist teachers by providing individual or group assistance to students in academic activities; assist students in the acquisition of sensory perception, daily living, communication, and pre-vocational skills; assist teachers in art, physical education, recreation, and fitness programs; consult with teachers and program staff regarding individual and group educational and behavioral goals and objectives and implement programs designed to achieve those goals; maintain routine records; collect observational data and provide feedback regarding students' behavior; accept direction from teacher concerning programs and materials to meet students needs; assist in establishing and maintaining an orderly physical environment; supervise students in play activities and on field trips; help students learn how to sequence tasks; and proctor examinations.

Appendix 1-D

Santa Clara County Schools
San Jose, California

PERSONNEL COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SANTA CLARA COUNTY
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
100 SKYPORT DRIVE
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA 95110
(408) 299-3701

PLEASE POST!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

CLASSIFICATION: SPECIAL EDUCATION AIDE - PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

An OPEN & PROMOTIONAL examination will be given to establish a list of eligible candidates for positions in this classification. Applicants will be notified, following the application deadline indicated below, of examination procedures in which they must compete. Final selection of appointees will be made from among the candidates who appear at the top of the resultant eligibility list, although reemployment lists and transfer and reinstatement requests will be given priority. A separate Promotional Eligibility List to receive initial consideration will be established except where this announcement indicates that the "dual certification" rule will be used in establishing the eligibility list. Lists are used for a specified period, usually one year, or until there are insufficient candidates remaining who are willing and available to accept employment.

	Range	Start	6 months	1¼ years	2¼ years	3¼ years
SALARY:	37	$807.74	$845.37	$884.35	$924.67	$969.03

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Applications will be taken continuously, with examination scheduled as vacancies require.

DEFINITION: The Special Education Aide - Physically Handicapped, under general supervision, will assist teachers in supervising classroom, playground, cafeteria, recreation center, and field trip activities of severely physically handicapped students; will relieve teachers of routine clerical and authorized instructional duties; and will perform related tasks as required.

REQUIREMENTS: Candidates must have the ability to communicate effectively with staff, students, and others contacted in the course of work; knowledge of correct English usage, spelling, punctutation and grammar and arithmetic, and the ability to assist students with these and other academic subjects through a twelfth grade level; the ability to empathize with the special needs of the severely physically handicapped; a willingness to assist students with toileting and other body hygiene tasks; the ability to physically lift students onto and off of toilets, chairs, and tables; the ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions; the ability to perform routine clerical and recordkeeping duties: the ability to read, write, and speak clearly and distinctly; the ability to react with flexibility, creativity, and sensitivity to changing situations and needs; the ability to work independently exercising good judgment; and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

RESPONSIBILITIES: On a team teaching or individualized basis the Special Education Aide - Physically Handicapped will assist teachers and specialists by providing individual and group assistance to students in academic and other curricular activities in fine and gross motor skill development, and in the development of socialization, communication, and pre-vocational skills; consult with teachers and program staff regarding individualized group educational, behavioral, and developmental goals and objectives, and implement programs designed to achieve these goals; set up work areas and prepare materials; sets up exhibits, displays, and collections; may operate audio-visual equipment; keeps routine records; collects observational data and provides feedback regarding pupils; may administer and score tests; may assist in performing clerical tasks such as typing, duplicating, filing, and taking attendance; supervises students in play activities and on field trips; accept direction from teacher concerning programs and materials to meet student needs; carrig out authorized emergency first aid and safety procedures; may assist with loading and unloading of buses; familiarize and guide substitute teacher when teacher is absent; supervise lunches including assisting students in developing eating skills; perform a variety of house cleaning and bodily care chores including diapering, toileting, toothbrushing, washing and dressing; may brace and unbrace limbs and adjust prostheses. May accompany Special education students to regular classes assisting in normal school day activities.

Appendix 1-E

Richmond Public Schools
Richmond, Virginia

Entry Level I

Title	Definition of Terms	Selection Criteria	Educational Requirements
Instructional Teacher Aide/Parent Educator	Refers to a special assistant to the teacher, a nonprofessional who performs instructional duties	1. Ability to supervise children 2. Ability to reinforce skills taught by teacher 3. Ability to work effectively with adults and children	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency or must be working toward G.E.D. 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training
Non-Instructional Teacher Aide	Refers to a special assistant to a teacher, a nonprofessional who performs non-instructional duties	1. Ability to work effectively with adults and children 2. Ability to read 3. Ability to write	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency or must be working toward G.E.D. (Exceptions may be made to this requirement) 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training
Clerical Aide	Refers to a special assistant to the principal or secretary, a non-professional who performs clerical duties	1. Must have clerical skills 2. A command of the English language 3. Ability to communicate effectively	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training
Library Aide	Refers to a special assistant to the librarian, a nonprofessional who performs clerical and instructional duties	1. Ability to communicate 2. Ability to read 3. Ability to perform some clerical tasks	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency or must be working toward G.E.D. 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training
Physical Education Aide	Refers to a special assistant to the physical education teacher, or perceptual-motor specialist, a non-professional who assists with physical and perceptual-motor development	1. Ability to work effectively with children 2. Ability to instruct students in physical activities 3. Ability to read	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency or must be working toward G.E.D. 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training
Medical Aide	Refers to a special assistant to the nurse, a nonprofessional who assists in providing health services to students	1. Ability to carry out emergency procedures as directed by the principal or nurse 2. Ability to read 3. Ability to write 4. Ability to communicate	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency or must be working toward G.E.D. 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training
Social Worker Aide	Refers to a special assistant to the social worker, a non-professional who performs duties determined to be necessary by the social worker	1. Ability to work effectively with parents, teachers and children 2. Ability to communicate	1. Must have a high school diploma or its equivalency or must be working toward G.E.D. 2. Participate in pre-service and in-service training

Appendix 1-F

St. Paul Public Schools
St. Paul, Minnesota

SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Dr. George P. Young, Superintendent

11/21/79

PERSONNEL OFFICE
Clyde R. Manchester, Assistant Director

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT

YOUTH LIAISON/OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH, SPECIAL EDUCATION

Applications from qualified individuals will be accepted for the position of Youth Liaison/ Out-of-School Youth, with the Special Education Department of the St. Paul Public Schools. A letter of application containing a statement of the applicant's training, experience, and other qualifications should be addressed to Mr. Clyde Manchester, Assistant Director of Personnel, 360 Colborne, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102, so as to be received no later than December 7, 1979.

QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates should possess as many as possible of the following qualifications:

1) Training and/or experience with neglected or delinquent, handicapped, G.L.D. or S.L.B.P. adolescents in an educational setting.
2) Experience or familiarity with the functions of an outreach program for handicapped, delinquent, and/or distressed youth.
3) Experience or familiarity with the theories and techniques of behavior management and contingency contracting.
4) Experience or familiarity with the social and economic problems of out-of-school youth.
5) Experience or familiarity in establishing or improving the vocational adjustment and skill development of program participants.
6) Experience or familiarity in the placement of out-of-school youth in subsidized or unsubsidized employment.

DUTIES

Under the direction of the Supervisor, Vocational/Educational Service, O.S.Y., of the Special Education Department's Out-of-School Youth Program, the individual will:

1) Communicate with out-of-school youth to encourage them to participate in the on-going classes.
2) Assist in the placement of program participants in appropriate classroom settings, and in subsidized or unsubsidized employment.
3) Assist professional staff in curriculum development, planning, instruction, grading, and evaluation.
4) Accomplish effective utilization of community resources.
5) Assist in staff development and training.
6) Perform other such duties as may be assigned by the building principal.

SALARY - The individuals will be contracted through June 6, 1980, at Educational Assistant salary, Level II ($412.50 bi-weekly).

Appendix 1-G

St. Paul Public Schools
St. Paul, Minnesota

Saint Paul Public Schools Dr. George P. Young, Superintendent	7/25/79	PERSONNEL OFFICE Clyde R. Manchester, Assistant Director

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT

SPECIAL EDUCATION/PROJECT EXPLORE

Applications from qualified personnel are being accepted for the position of Educational Assistant in the Special Education/Project Explore Program. A letter of application containing a resume' or statement of the applicant's training, experience, and other qualifications should be addressed to Mr. Clyde R. Manchester, Assistant Director of Personnel, Administration Building, 360 Colborne Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102, so as to be received no later than August 15, 1979.

QUALIFICATIONS

1) Familiarity with various handicapping conditions.
2) Past experience in working with handicapped young adults in vocational settings preferred, but not necessary.
3) Ability to speak and write effectively.
4) Pleasant manner, and good rapport with students.
5) Ability to work flexibly and cooperatively with school personnel, parents, community agencies, and business men.
6) Hold, or be eligible to hold, vocational licensure as Supplemental Support Staff/Technical Tutor.
7) Familiarity with computers.

DUTIES

1) Assist in planning and implementing VEDS (Vocational Education Data System).

2) Assist the Facilitator for the Vocational Services Program for the handicapped in placing and monitoring students in skill training.

3) Assist with liaison work between technical tutors in skill training programs and teachers of the handicapped in neighborhood schools and with parents.

4) Assist the Vocational Education Supervisor with the follow-up study.

5) Facilitate individual and small group tours to training sites within the district.

6) Perform other duties as assigned by the program coordinator.

SALARY

Salary is based on the salary schedule for Educational Assistants, Level II, ($425 bi-weekly), to be contracted for the 1979-80 school year through June 6, 1980.

Appendix 1-H

Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

Job Description:

MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATION ASSISTANT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Performs somewhat complex entry level work in providing direct client care, interaction, and assistance in the development of treatment, care and training programs for mentally ill and/or mentally retarded persons in mental health and/or mental retardation facilities and community centers. Work includes some responsibility for developing client or program progress reports; communicating and interacting with diverse professional disciplines and paraprofessional staff regarding clients and programs; supervising and/or directing clients participating in programs and activities. Duties performed under supervision in accordance with established policies, practices and procedures.

EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

Reports, orally or by written record, observations of physical, mental and emotional reactions and behaviors of clients.

Develops reports regarding client progress or behavior in treatment or developmental program.

Confers, in a team setting, with paraprofessional staff concerning client's needs, problems or progress in individual plan of program.

Discusses client condition, behavior or level with co-workers or supervisor to develop information for treatment, care or training program.

Works with and assists lower level direct care employees in the implementation of treatment, therapy or developmental programs for clients.

Plans and/or directs staff or clients in procedures to be followed to insure safety and well-being of clients in emergency situations such as fire, accident or disaster.

Plans for, assists, and participates in providing clients with living needs, health care and related activities, such as personal hygiene, feeding, taking vital signs,etc.

Appendix 1-H (continued)

Escorts clients to structured or unstructured activities to provide socialization, exercise, recreation, etc.

Escorts and/or drives clients to appointments such as X-ray, clinic, dentist, or other resources or services on or off facility/center grounds.

Performs related duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS (continued)

Education, Experience and Training

High school graduation, GED or competency evaluation of experience plus six (6) months experience as an MHMR Aide or equivalent position plus demonstration of competencies required by agency approved standardized training for MHMR Aide.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of causes, symptoms and behaviors of various types of mental illness, mental retardation and/or physical disabilities affecting clients.

Knowledge of basic safety, first aid, health and personal care principles and practices for client care and treatment. Ability to interpret, communicate and carry out written and oral instructions.

Ability to observe and recall behaviors, emotions and physical characteristics of clients; to express thoughts, observations and incidents in a clear, concise and factual manner, both orally and in writing.

Ability to provide specific treatments, therapies and/or developmental programs to clients as directed.

Ability to provide assistance and direction to other staff in the care and treatment of mentally ill and/or mentally retarded clients.

Ability to interact with professional and paraprofessional staff, in a team setting, in order to clarify and develop realistic program goals for clients.

Physical Characteristics and Temperament

Physical condition sufficient to perform required tasks. Temperament suited to work; emotional stability, mature judgement and personal integrity.

Wyandotte County Special Education Cooperative, Kansas City, Kansas

PARAPROFESSIONAL
EVALUATION REPORT

PARAPROFESSIONAL_____ SCHOOL_____

The evaluator should check each performance area to indicate the paraprofessional's status.

PERFORMANCE AREA	RATING		
I. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	UNSATISFACTORY
A. Appearance			
B. Attitude			
C. Dependability			
D. Self-Confidence			
E. Physical Fitness and Stamina			
F. Voice and Speech			
G. Communication Skills			
H. Interactions With Students			
I. Interactions With Supervising Teacher			
J. Interactions with Building Staff			
K. Composure Under Pressure			
II. JOB PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS			
A. Clerical Skills			
B. Follows Rules & Regulations			
C. Follows Oral Instructions and Written Plans			
D. Ability to Work Without Supervision			
E. Decision Making Ability			
F. Initiative			
G. Ability to Motivate Students			
H. Ability to Monitor Student Performance			
I. Ability to Reinforce Student Skill Development	21		

Appendix 1-I (continued)

PARAPROFESSIONAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCHOOL _____

	Above Average	Average	Unsatisfactory
J. Ability to Clarify Lesson Concepts.			
K. Support of Classroom Discipline.			
L. Quantity of Work			

GENERAL LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE Place an X in the appropriate position along the continuum	Above Average	Average	Unsatisfactory

JOB TARGET:

SUPERVISING TEACHER:

RECOMMENDATION: BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR

SIGNATURES:

PARAPROFESSIONAL _____ DATE _____

SUPERVISING TEACHER _____ DATE _____

BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR _____ DATE _____

Signature need not indicate concurrence with this evaluation, merely completion of the process.

Appendix 1-J

From Paraprofessionals in Special Education: A Handbook for Local Directors
Developed by: Indiana Department of Public Instruction, Division of Special Education;
Porter County Special Education Cooperative; and
Indiana University Developmental Training Center.

Paraprofessional Rating
Porter County Special Education Cooperative

Paraprofessional _____ Date of Conference:

School Year: 198 ____ - 198 ____ ☐ Probationary Year 1st: _____

School _____ 2nd: _____

I. Information about Job and Role for the current year

1. Description of Program and Paraprofessional's Responsibilities (Number, ages and primary handicap of students served, principle daily responsibilities and duties)

_____

_____

_____

2. Teacher(s) with whom paraprofessional works for 1½ hours or more per day

_____

3. Other special comments (e.g. special training program) _____

_____

II. Information about Current Performance of Job and Role Instructions:

This rating is designed to stimulate a dialogue between teacher(s) and paraprofessional about current performance. Strengths as well as areas in need of improvement are to be identified and discussed. The evaluation process is inevitably a subjective one, but the goal for evaluator and the person being evaluated should be the same: improvement of qualities and skills so that services to students are of the highest quality possible. (If any of the items listed do not apply, please write DNA next to the box).

A. QUALITIES

		Meets or exceeds role responsibilities		Adequate	Needs Improvement		Comments
1. Is Courteous	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Uses Good Judgment	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Is Industrious	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Is Flexible	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Is Acceptable	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Is Consistent	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Is Tolerant	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Is Dependable	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Is Punctual	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Takes pride in job	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Is positive and cooperative	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	

Appendix 1-J (continued)

B. SKILLS

		Meets or exceeds role responsibilities		Adequate	Needs Improvement		Comments
1. Follows instructions	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Effectively tutors small groups and/or individual children	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Is fair and impartial with children	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Accepts criticism or suggestions with a mature attitude.	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Makes appropriate changes as a result of suggestions or criticism.	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Makes constructive criticisms of the teacher and/or the school to the proper person for positive change.	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Keeps information about children and families confidential.	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	

Appendix 1-J (continued)

		Meets or exceeds role responsibilities		Adequate	Needs Improvement		Comments
8. Operates school equipment efficiently: ditto machine, film projector, etc.	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Effectively complements teacher.	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Actively seeks information and learning opportunities related to job (e.g. ASSIST, CLASS Inservices)	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Assumes responsibility when appropriate	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Functions independently on familiar tasks	1st	1	2	3	4	5	
	2nd	1	2	3	4	5	

III GENERAL COMMENTS

1. Summary of Comments:

Signatures

First Evaluation

Teacher: _____

Paraprofessional _____

Second Evaluation

Teacher: _____

Paraprofessional _____

☐ Evaluating teacher and/or paraprofessional request conference with supervisor prior to decisions by program supervisor.

To be completed by program supervisor (regarding the 19____ - 19____ School Year):

☐ Advise continued employment by the Porter County Special Education Cooperative; subject to availability of funds and needs of individual programs.

Conditions:

☐ Similar assignment. ☐ Transfer of assignment. ☐ Continued probationary status.

☐ Contact supervisor to arrange Review of Employment conference.

Signature of Supervisor _____ Date _____

II. SALARIES

How much are special education paraprofessionals paid for their work? For those who appreciate what many paraprofessionals contribute to the classroom, the answer may be that they aren't paid enough. Paraprofessional salaries and the requisites for pay increases vary widely from state to state and even from school district to district within a given state. This section takes a look at some salary scales and the bases for advancing on those scales. It also examines some other compensation issues such as participation in benefits, credit for taking college courses, and the relation of paraprofessional salaries in special education and other human service fields.

The salary figures quoted in this section are not there for comparison as much as to flesh out the relative salaries paid on a given schedule.

In Wyandotte County, Kansas, salary increases are tied to seniority and education. A new Assistant Teacher with less than one year of college made $552/mo. during the 1980-81 school year there. If that Assistant Teacher came to the job with four years of college, he or she would have made $728/mo. Increases in salary are gradual. Assistant Teachers who were on the job for eight years without furthering their education made $608/mo. in 1980-81 compared with $856/mo. for those eight year veterans who had completed four years of college.

Salaries

In San Jose, California, Special Education Aides working with children with severe handicapping conditions make $692/mo. starting out on 10 month assignments, 6 hours daily. After 3 1/2 years, the scale brings these same employees $830/mo. Those on 12 month assignments working 7 hour days start at $848/mo. and can get $1,017/mo. after 3 1/2 years on the job. The first increase for both types of employees comes after a 6 month probationary period. The Aides are included in insurance benefits and the Public Employees Retirement System.

Milwaukee also uses a system based on longevity. The Milwaukee Public Schools are starting their Paraprofessional Aides at $6.36/hr. in 1981. Increases are based on hours of service (e.g., $6.54/hr. for 1,150 hours, $6.86 for 2,300 hours, up to $7.09/hr. for 4,600 hours). The 1982 schedule contemplates a $6.90/hr. start ranging up to $7.69/hr. for those with 4,600 hours of service. If the paraprofessional works more than 20 hours per week, he or she is entitled to the benefits package: sick leave, injury pay, and health and life insurance.

At the Bethesda Lutheran Home in Watertown, Wisconsin, Health Care Technicians' salaries are governed by this policy: "The starting wage will be commensurate with established abilities and experience and as provided in the Bethesda Lutheran Home Wage and Salary Schedule. Increases will be granted according to merit as described in the current Wage and Salary Schedule."

Paraprofessionals in Baltimore are members of the American Federation of Teachers. Their "Memorandum of Understanding" with the City details all their rights as employees as well as their extensive benefits and the basis of salary increments. They are

given step increases for prior experience, for longevity of service, and for completing college credits. At step 1, an Educational Assistant with two years of college will make $7,225 for the school year (as of February, 1982) as opposed to $6,407 with just a high school diploma. At step 8, the Assistant with two years of college will make $9,263, but only $8,269 with a high school diploma.

Special Education Paraprofessionals in Philadelphis have annualization (as do teachers) and are paid from September 1 through June 30, with the yearly salary divided into 21.6 pay checks. They start at $5,143 (1980) and can make up to $10,552 on a 6 step scale. Members of the AFT, $711 per school year is paid into the Federation Health and Welfare Fund and Legal Services Fund for them. As part of a career development program, they receive $15 per college credit for a maximum of six credits in any one year.

Paraprofessionals in mental health in Texas make salaries that are uniform throughout the state. They are the same for workers in community based programs and for those working in state facilities for the mentally retarded. They begin with a 6 month probationary period as MHMR Aides and make from $610/mo. to $768/mo. During this period, the Aide receives agency mandated training based on a curriculum that is generic. If both are satisfactory, the Aide is promoted to MHMR Assistant after 6 months. If not, the Aide is transferred to a non-direct care position or let go. There are eight steps across each salary group and six groups for paraprofessional personnel. Thus, at step 3, an MHMR Assistant can make from $652/mo. to $821/mo. The most advanced salary group (7) is MHMR Supervisor II's.

They make from $848/mo. to $1,068/mo. Employees earn an extra $20/mo. for every five years of service they put in. In addition, the state pays most of an employee's Social Security.

The Manpower Task Force of the Nebraska Mental Retardation Panel conducted a survey of salaries in early 1980 in response to findings that"low employee compensation is a contributing factor to the high degree of staff turnover witnessed in mental retardation programs." They set out to learn "1) the degree of variation existing in salaries earned by employees performing equivalent work across six mental retardation regions and 2) if salaries earned by employees of community based mental retardation (CBMR) programs are competitive with the salaries offered by other human service organizations for similar positions." The results of the Nebraska survey showed "an extreme and generally unpatterned variation in compensation paid to the state mental retardation employees." The Task Force recommended equalizing pay for the same CBMR jobs in the various regions and working toward fair and equal compensation for all mental retardation employees.

Jeptha Greer, Executive Director of the Council for Exceptional Children, has said that step increases in paraprofessional salaries should be tied to competence. "We must have a master salary schedule from the principal on down based on reasonable criteria such as responsibility, background, experience, and competence," he said. He also feels that paraprofessionals should be eligible for merit pay, benefits, payroll deduction programs, and credit union participation.

In Louisiana, where a competency based certification system has just been implemented, efforts are underway to tie salary increases to advancement in the 4-level system. Salaries are not directly related to Kansas's certification system, but the fact that the system is in force statewide gives local school districts the opportunity to link salaries to the attainment of higher rank in the system.

Conclusion

The determination of any staff member's salary is a complex decision. In the case of special education paraprofessionals, it is dependent on the availability of funds (federal, state, local, and/or private), the value of paraprofessionals to the school system, the cost of living in the area, and more. Here are some questions that might be considered in establishing a salary schedule for paraprofessionals in special education:

1. Should salary increases be tied to longevity of service, educational advancement, training, competence, or some combination of these?
2. If the state has a certification system, should the salary schedule be linked to it?
3. Are the salaries competitive with those of others performing similar tasks in similar settings and programs?
4. Does the salary schedule for paraprofessionals relate to the schedules for other personnel from administrators on down?
5. Do the paraprofessionals partake of a benefit plan that other personnel are entitled to?

Salaries

6. Are representatives of paraprofessio al staff (whether unionized or not) consulted in the development of their salary schedules? Are the staff who work with paraprofessionals consulted as well?
7. Are salary provisions made for those paraprofessionals who are continuing their education?
8. Is there an established system for starting those with experience at higher salary levels than those without experience?

III. CERTIFICATION

As the number of paraprofessionals working in educational programs for those with handicapping conditions increased by leaps and bounds over the last decade, so did the attention paid to these unique staff members by administrators, trainers, writers, and others in the field. Though they've always known it, paraprofessional staff are now acknowledged by their teachers and others as indispensible members of the educational team. This increase in recognition has contributed to their sense of identity in the educational system.

These and other factors have led to attention being directed to the issue of credentialing or otherwise establishing criteria for employment that would facilitate career opportunities and mobility for special education paraprofessionals. Representatives of a broad range of interest groups are concerned with the possibility of developing standards, but, as a member of a national task force on the subject said, "Certification is like ending inflation; everyone is for it, but there is a lot of disagreement on how to do it."

Not to oversimplify, but everyone approaches the task with a different set of priorities. The paraprofessionals themselves want recognition of their contributions to the education of the children, as well as job security and pay increases. Union organizers want a system that recognizes seniority and on-the-job experience. Administrators want one that will guarantee them competent staff, while being cost-effective at the same time and not prohibit them from replacing staff that aren't working out on

their jobs. Teachers, even though they recognize the contributions of assistants, do not want the distinction between teacher and paraprofessional to become blurred.

In 1979, the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped funded a one-year National Task Force on Certification Procedures for Paraprofessionals in Exceptional Student Education. The Task Force brought together people with a variety of responsibilities in the field of special education including paraprofessionals, union representatives directors of professional education associations and college trainers. The group was able to come up with many good reasons why special education paraprofessionals should be certified. They shared information about the few existing state certification plans and some members proposed some models and guidelines. But the group was unable to reach consensus on the issues before it. As Task Force member Harold (Bill) Heller, the Professional Standards Chairman of CEC, wrote in a memorandum to the group, "The problems of certification... are complicated by the fact that states have a number of agencies involved with classification of paraprofessional positions." Heller concludes, "I would propose that an effort be undertaken to look at all paraprofessional duties and responsibilities within a given state and arrive at a process which would determine licensure based on the roles to be assumed in various agencies in each state." Indeed, in New Jersey a task force has been assembled to take this very approach.

What they're discussing in New Jersey, others have established in Louisiana. It has adopted a permit system that is tied to training and demonstrated competence. The four level system also provides for salary increases as each new level is attained.

Louisiana's Paraprofessional Coordinator, Virginia Beridon, says that the state mandated the certification program "in recognition of the role of paraprofessionals in special education programs." Another factor was the sheer increase in numbers of paraprofessionals employed under Louisiana's Minimum Foundation Program. They grew from 2,085 in 1977-78 to 2,744 during 1980-81, a jump of 32% in three years. The paraprofessionals are required now by state regulations (Act 754) to complete an inservice training program based on a curriculum developed by the Division of Special Education Services.

How Louisiana did it

Involved in the development of the training standards were people from the state department, university personnel, teacher representatives from state institutions and paraprofessionals themselves. They defined special education paraprofessionals as non-certified persons working under the supervision of a teacher or other professional working with exceptional children. This included bus attendants, classroom attendants, teacher aides, and other more specialized assistants such as social work case managers, OT/PT aides, screening aides, and paraprofessional training unit personnel.

Certification

After deciding on a competency based model, the competencies were identified and grouped into three permit levels. A fourth level was added for those with A.A. degrees. The system was tested, revisions were made, and it was submitted to the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and approved. Upon granting approval, the Board directed the state department to consider a four-level salary schedule tied to the permit system.

The system is being phased in to allow for the training of those already serving as paraprofessionals in special education. The training curriculum is being developed and the first group of instructors of paraprofessionals will be trained in August 1981. These trainers, nominated by LEA supervisors, are expected to have a Masters and be certified in at least two areas of special education, have three years experience teaching in special education, and demonstrate skills in the facilitation of adult learning. They will be drawn from the ranks of teachers, administrators, inservice personnel, university personnel, and others who meet the criteria.

Accompanying the Louisiana curriculum will be a Utilization Manual for teachers and administrators. It will give an overview of the system, model job descriptions, options for employing paraprofessionals, and guidelines for teacher-paraprofessional relationships and for the evaluation of paraprofessionals.

Kansas was first

Kansas has had a three level permit system in place since 1977. It uses inservice training hours, couse credit, and degrees as criteria for advancement. Whereas the Louisiana system restricts some paraprofessional jobs to those with more than a Levl I permit, Kansas requires only that a paraprofessional earn

a Paraprofessional I Permit by taking four inservice sessions totaling twenty hours. The training can be obtained through the state department, LEA, or an agency or professional organization. College coursework may be substituted for inservice hours at the discretion of the LEA. New paraprofessionals can get their Paraprofessional I permits by attending an inservice orientation and guaranteeing that they will fulfill the other requirements over the course of the year.

Paraprofessional II Permit holders in Kansas must have two years experience as an instructional paraprofessional and complete thirty college hours or 450 inservice hours of training (or some combination). And Paraprofessional III's need three years experience and 60 college hours, an A.A. degree, a certificate from a vocational-technical school, or 900 inservice hours (or some combination).

Texas also has state regulations mandating certification but in their case for all paraprofessionals, in special education and otherwise. Also on three levels, it is administered by the local districts. Education Aide I's must be high school graduates, have "experience related to working with students or parents as approved by employing superintendent," and be recommended by the superintendent. Aide II's need two years of experience as I's or 15 appropriate college hours or demonstrate proficiency in the field to the school district. III's must have 30 credit hours and 3 years experience as a I or a II. The Texas law also goes into detail about paraprofessional roles. (See section on Job Descriptions.)

In addition to the states mentioned above, eight others (Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, and Vermont) have developed credentialing systems for all paraprofessionals. Vermont's standards are illustrative, though no two states used the same definition as to what constituted a certification procedure. (See Appendix 3)

Vermont's state board has developed a four level system. To earn a Level I Paraprofessional Certificate, an applicant must complete six semester hours of approved training or the equivalent on a preservice basis or on-the-job during the first month of employment. Level II certificates go to those who have "demonstrated competence" for a year and have acquired 30 semester hours of approved academic work or the equivalent. III's must have two years demonstrated competence and 60 semester hours of training. And the Level IV Paraprofessional needs three years demonstrated competence and 90 semester hours. Vermont's plan allows for advancement to teacher from Level IV if certain requirements are met. Advancement to any level is contingent on recommendations of administrators and supervising teachers based on "documented observations and evaluations."

Like Kansas and Louisiana, Wisconsin also certifies special education paraprofessionals separately from those in regular education. There are cases to be made for both general and categorical certification of paraprofessionals. Loretta Johnson, an AFT representative on the national certification Task Force, wrote,

"Standards for certification must necessarily be somewhat general because of the diversity of classification from one school system to another." She concludes, "Paraprofessionals should be certified as <u>just that</u> and...special education competencies requiring special training should be determined and required within local categorical levels, rather than through state certification."

On the other hand, more uniform statewide standards for special education paraprofessionals can arguably allow for greater lateral and upward career mobility for them as they seek to change jobs and/or residences within their respective states. Certification for special education paraprofessionals may place still more limits, but it has the potential of bringing about certain benefits. Paraprofessionals may gain consistency in wages and benefits, as well as job security. At the very least it gives the paraprofessional recognition for her or his work and development and heightens her or his sense of self-worth.

Teachers and administrators gain when a system is implemented insofar as certification can promote quality education services.

The bottom line for judging the usefulness of any policy in special education should be the effect it has on students' learning. Since certification is an effort to recognize paraprofessional contributions and provide for their advancement, it can lead to higher morale among these workers and, consequently, to more productivity. It also provides for at least minimum degrees of competence or training, which can help to upgrade the services to children whose progress in the past may have been stalled at the hands of paraprofessionals without any training for their work.

Certification

Paraprofessionals in related fields are also being considered for certification. The National Center for the Study of the Professions received a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to look into credentialing of paraprofessionals in mental health work. The Department of Health and Human Services has contracted with Bank Street College of Education in New York City to implement the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentialing System, a national competency based assessment and credentialing program for care-givers in center-based programs for children ages 3 to 5.

Conclusion

This section has raised some of the issues involved in establishing a certification procedure and carrying it out. It has also provided specific examples of how some states and localities have addressed the question of credentialing and setting standards for paraprofessionals.

If you're debating certification strategies in your area, there are some questions and issues that ought to be raised:

1. How would the quality of services be improved by a certification/credentialing system for paraprofessionals?
2. Do we need a statewide program or should we allow local agencies to set standards and criteria?
3. If we choose to credential paraprofessional personnel, what provisions will we make for those who are already employed as paraprofessionals? How will it effect career mobility?
4. Are we involving all personnel necessary in our decisions?
5. If we are tying our system to training, are we prepared to provide that training or will we contract it out?

This list of questions is by no means complete. Phyllis Kelly, Director of Paraprofessional Programs for the Kansas Department of Special Education, has raised these issues:

1. Don't necessarily insist on "certification for paraprofessionals" as commonly defined.
2. Know the literature and resources well.
3. Attempt to avoid open conflicts with opposing groups on the issue.
4. Be willing to compromise in order to at least establish the system.
5. Formulate a plan that is easy to implement at all levels (SEA, LEA, etc.) and is inexpensive to administer.
6. Make the requirements flexible, but still maintain standards.
7. Use your support base constantly.
8. Don't forget the paraprofessionals. Their ideas must be included.
9. Attempt to alleviate fears about the plan by explaining the positive elements for having certification of paraprofessionals.
10. Don't give up due to administrative or bureaucratic red tape. Be patient!

Appendix 3-A

Form 8-82-84-124

STATE OF KANSAS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARAPROFESSIONAL PERMIT

_____
(NAME OF PARAPROFESSIONAL)

has successfully completed the requirements of a special education paraprofessional as stipulated by the State Board of Education.

* Paraprofessional I Permit _____
* Paraprofessional II Permit _____
* Paraprofessional III Permit _____

_____
(Coordinator of Special Education Paraprofessional Programs)

* requirements on back

_____
(Special Education Administration)

White-Paraprofessional Copy; Blue-LEA Copy; Pink-State Copy

PARAPROFESSIONAL I PERMIT: This is the only required level a paraprofessional must obtain. The requirement is —

Participation in at least four inservice sessions offered by the local education agency, Kansas State Department of Education, and/or other agency or professional organization totaling at least 20 clock hours of inservice training per school year.

The local education agency may choose to substitute all or part of the above requirements with an equivalent amount of appropriate college coursework taken during the school year.

Paraprofessionals, new to the local education agency, shall receive a Paraprofessional I Permit after participation in an inservice orientation session and upon guarantee by the local education agency that the paraprofessional shall meet the requirement as stated above for Paraprofessional I Permit.

PARAPROFESSIONAL II PERMIT: The requirements are —

1. Two years experience as an instructional paraprofessional.
2. Completion of 30 semester college hours of approved academic work; an equivalence of 450 clock hours of approved inservice training; or a combination of each of the two totaling 450 clock hours.

Appendix 3-A (continued)

PARAPROFESSIONAL III PERMIT: The requirements are —

1. Three years experience as an instructional paraprofessional.
2. Completion of 60 semester college hours of approved academic work or an associate degree from an approved training program for instructional paraprofessionals; a certificate from an approved training program for instructional paraprofessionals from a vocational technical school; an equivalence of 900 clock hours of approved inservice training; or a combination of each of the four totaling 900 clock hours.

In order to advance to a higher level, a paraprofessional shall verify successful completion of the requirements stipulated under each previous permit.

Entry Level Placement for Credentialed Personnel

The superintendent, special education director, or other designated staff may decide what level permit a credentialed person may obtain upon entry into the school system as a special education instructional paraprofessional. The experience criteria may be waived for these individuals.

Appendix 3-B

Wisconsin State Law

B. Handicapped Children's Aide (883) *Wis. Adm. Code sec. PI 3.03 (11) (a)*

A handicapped children's aide license may be issued to a person serving as a teacher's aide or para-professional assigned to a special education program or service supported by the handicapped children's services division. Role and function will be determined by the professional educator whom the handicapped children's aide assists and may encompass clerical, housekeeping, supervisory or instructional assistance depending upon the competency, background and training of the specific teacher aide or para-professional.

For the 3-year license, the applicant must be at least 20 years of age and have completed one of the following:

1. 3 years of college course work, or
2. 3 years' experience supervising structured youth activities or
3. a combination of 1 and 2 equivalent to 3 years

No unlimited (life) credential is issued in this area.

Appendix 3-C

Vermont Credentialing System

VII. STATE BOARD POLICY FOR CERTIFICATION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS

"Educational personnel in the public schools hired to assist professionally certified personnel in the teaching-learning process shall be certified as paraprofessionals by the State Department of Education according to varying levels of training and competency as determined by the Department." (State Board Action February 15, 1972.)

As the more common term "aides" implies, paraprofessionals are assistants to professional teachers. When a paraprofessional works with a small group, the pupils are those with whom the professional teacher has regular contact and responsibility. Paraprofessionals may perform specific teaching tasks, for which they have been trained. They are to be assigned to and under the supervision of a certified professional teacher. Support personnel such as clerks and secretaries not directly involved in the instructional program would not be eligible for paraprofessional certification.

Paraprofessionals are to be classified according to Four Levels of training and demonstrated competency. The local school district shall determine its own method of evaluating competence and prescribing training programs. Advancement and renewal for the paraprofessional should be based primarily on task analysis and performance criteria developed by the Local Evaluation Agency.

1. LEVEL I PARAPROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

   Issued to an applicant who has completed six semester hours of approved training for paraprofessionals or the equivalent. This training may be acquired on a preservice basis or while on-the-job training the first month of employment if the program has been approved by the State Department of Education.

Appendix 3-C (continued)

2. LEVEL II PARAPROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

Issued to an applicant who has demonstrated competence as a paraprofessional for a minimum of one year experience or its equivalent. The applicant also must have acquired thirty semester hours of approved academic work or its equivalent.

3. LEVEL III PARAPROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

Issued to an applicant who has demonstrated competence as a paraprofessional for a minimum of two years or the equivalent. The applicant also must have acquired sixty semester hours of approved academic work or its equivalent.

4. LEVEL IV PARAPROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

Issued to an applicant who has demonstrated competence as a paraprofessional for a minimum of three years or the equivalent. The applicant also must have acquired ninety semester hours of approved academic work or its equivalent.

PERIOD OF VALIDITY AND RENEWAL

First level paraprofessional certificates are renewable annually, Second Level certificates, every two years; Third Level certificates every three years; Fourth Level certificates every four years; with the school administrator's recommendation or that of the Local Evaluation Agency.

Entry to teaching (professional), would be from Level IV by means of one of the procedures described under "The Professional Probationary Certificate." Initial placement at a particular Level or movement to another Level shall be supported by specific recommendations from administrators, and supervising teachers based upon documented observations and evaluation.

FEE

Application for initial certification at any level must be accompanied by a fee of $5.00. A fee of $5.00 will be assessed when an applicant applies for certification at a higher level.

Appendix 3-D

Louisiana Standards for Special Education Paraprofessional Permits

Permit Level I

Level I paraprofessionals working in special education programs in Louisiana shall demonstrate the competencies that follow by successful completion of an approved in-service training program.

1. Understanding of Level I paraprofessional role, responsibilities, and limitations.
2. Ability to work effectively and cooperatively with other staff members.
3. Ability to communicate effectively (oral, written, and non-verbal).
4. Understanding of the intellectual, physical, and social/emotional characteristics of the various handicapping conditions.
5. Awareness of terminology associated with special education and various handicapping conditions.
6. Awareness of generalized training procedures associated with academic, self-help, motor and social skills.
7. Knowledge of general health and safety procedures.
8. Ability to maintain an attractive, safe, hygenic classroom environment.
9. Ability to define and demonstrate basic personal grooming skills.
10. Awareness of requirements for safely positioning and handling students with handicapping conditions.
11. Ability to identify orthopedic appliances, equipment and prosthetic devices.
12. Knowledge and skills necessary to safely accompany children with handicaps in a passenger vehicle.
13. Ability to operate commonly used audio-visual and duplicating equipment.

Permit Level II

Level II paraprofessionals working in special education programs in Louisiana shall demonstrate all Level I competencies and the following additional competencies by successful completion of an approved training program.

1. Understanding of Level II paraprofessional role, responsibilities and limitations.
2. Understanding role and responsibility of teachers.
3. Understanding role and responsibilities of related service personnel.
4. Ability to interpret, communicate, and carry out written and oral instructions.
5. Knowledge and understanding of developmental patterns (normal and atypical).
6. Ability to define and use terminology commonly associated with special education and various handicapping conditions.
7. Knowledge of special education rules and procedures associated with screening and evaluation and development and implementation of IEP's.
8. Knowledge of confidentiality requirements and procedures.
9. Awareness of various community and regional agencies that serve children with handicaps and their families.
10. Ability to administer classroom assessment instruments.
11. Ability to observe and recall behaviors in an objective, systematic manner.
12. Ability to express observations in a clear, concise, factual manner, both orally and in writing.
13. Knowledge of basic principles of behavior shaping and classroom management.
14. Ability to count pinpointed behaviors.
15. Ability to implement recommended educational and training programs associated with academic, self-help, social and motor skills.
16. Ability to sequence recommended instructional activities or steps.
17. Ability to safely and appropriately position and handle children with handicapping conditions.
18. Ability to monitor use of orthopedic appliances, equipment, and prosthetic devices.
19. Ability to carry out basic health and first aid procedures.
20. Knowledge of health and safety procedures associated with medication, seizure management, etc.
21. Ability to implement recommended procedures associated with care of a child with specific handicapping conditions.
22. Ability to prepare routine classroom reports.

Appendix 3-D (continued)

Permit Level III

Level III Paraprofessionals working in special education programs in Louisiana shall demonstrate all Level I and II competencies and the following additional competencies by successful completion of an approved training program.

1. Understanding of Level III paraprofessional role, responsibilities, and limitations.
2. Ability to describe the characteristics and causes of various handicapping conditions.
3. Understanding the impact of a child's handicapping condition on the family.
4. Knowledge and skills required to communicate with various community agencies that serve children with handicaps and their families.
5. Knowledge of special education rules and regulations associated with implementation of federal and state law.
6. Ability to score and interpret basic classroom assessment instruments.
7. Ability to task analyze goals and objectives.
8. Knowledge and skills required to develop recommended educational and training programs associated with academic, self-help, social and motor skills.
9. Knowledge and skills required to develop recommended behavior shaping and classroom management procedures.
10. Ability to evaluate and report on effectiveness of educational and behavioral programs.
11. Ability to make recommended changes and adaptations in instructional activities and materials.
12. Knowledge and skills required to present information and demonstrate program procedures to parents/guardians of children with handicaps.
13. Knowledge and skills required to make recommended adjustments on orthopedic appliances, equipment, and prosthetic devices.
14. Knowledge and skills (as specified by employing agency) required to safely transport a student with handicaps in a passenger vehicle.

Permit Level IV

Level IV paraprofessionals working in Louisiana shall demonstrate all Level I, II, and III competencies. In addition, they will have earned a Special Education Paraprofessional Associate of Arts degree from an approved program.